

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This case has been carefully reviewed and analyzed in view of the Office Action dated 7 March 2006. Responsive to the Office Action, Independent Claim 1 and Claim 6 have been amended to clarify the inventive method that forms the basis of the subject Patent Application. Furthermore, Claims 2-3 have been cancelled by this Amendment and Claim 4 was previously cancelled.

In the Office Action the Examiner rejected Claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hirosawa (U.S. Patent # 6,473,180). However, the Examiner kindly indicated that Claims 5 and 7 are allowable and Claims 3, 6 and 8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of Claims 2-3 therein. Thus, Claim 3 has effectively been placed in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim, Claim 1, and any intervening claims, Claim 2. Thus, Claim 1 should now be allowable. Furthermore, since Claims 6 and 8 are dependent upon an allowable base claim, Claim 1, they should no longer be objected to.

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Reply to Office Action dated 7 March 2006

It is now believed that the subject Patent Application has been placed in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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